Busy Route of Telephones

434. SHRI MAULANA OBAIDULLAH KHAN AZMI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether telephone users generally get "all lines in this route are busy" message during peak hours; and

(b) if so, the steps taken/proposed to be taken to solve this problem ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN): (a) Sir, there are a number of operators both in Basic and Cellular Mobile Service having connectivity with other operators. Such route congestion announcement may come during peak hours depending on the availability and condition of the junction routes.

(b) Junction augmentation is a continuous process and based on traffic analysis, the junctions are augmented regularly in local and long distance network on different routes, by each operator to avoid congestion in busy routes.

New US law to hit Indian firms

435. SHRI KARNENDU BHATTACHARJEE: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of some new US Law that may hit Indian software companies;

(b) if so, the details of the law passed by the US Congress in this regard which would hamper the Indian Software service companies and their development in the United States;

(c) whether the matter has been taken up with the US Government and if so, the response of U.S. Government in the matter; and

(d) if the answer to part (c) above is in negative, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI THIRUNAVUKKARASAR): (a) No specific law has been enacted by the US so far which can be stated to be adversely affecting the interests of the Indian software industry. However, it is reported that some States in the US have contemplated bills seeking to impose restrictions on procurement of services by the State.

Several Bills have been introduced in the House of representatives recently which seek to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act with respect to the admission of HIB visas for temporary workers and L-1 intra-company transferee non-immigrants. One of these Bills propose to severely restrict grant of such visas and to place a cap of 35,000 on the number of annual L-1 visas (currently there is no limit); stop the practice of filing blanket petitions to hire L-1 workers; adds requirements to pay locally prevailing wages to L-1 workers; requires L-1 workers to have been employed by the petitioning firm continuously for three years full time and would require the employer to fulfill a number of conditions at the time of filing the applications.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Since these bills have to go through a lengthy legislative process, including adoption of similar bills by the US Senate, their final passage and becoming law is uncertain at this point of time. It may, therefore, be premature to take up the matter with the US Government at present.

(d) Does not arise.

Harassment of telephone subscribers

436. SHRIMATI BIMBA RAIKAR: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether there has been increasing volume of unsoliciated telephone calls from telemarketing agencies and market research